TINKLE EXPLAINS

PANGOLIN, THE SCALY MAMMAL

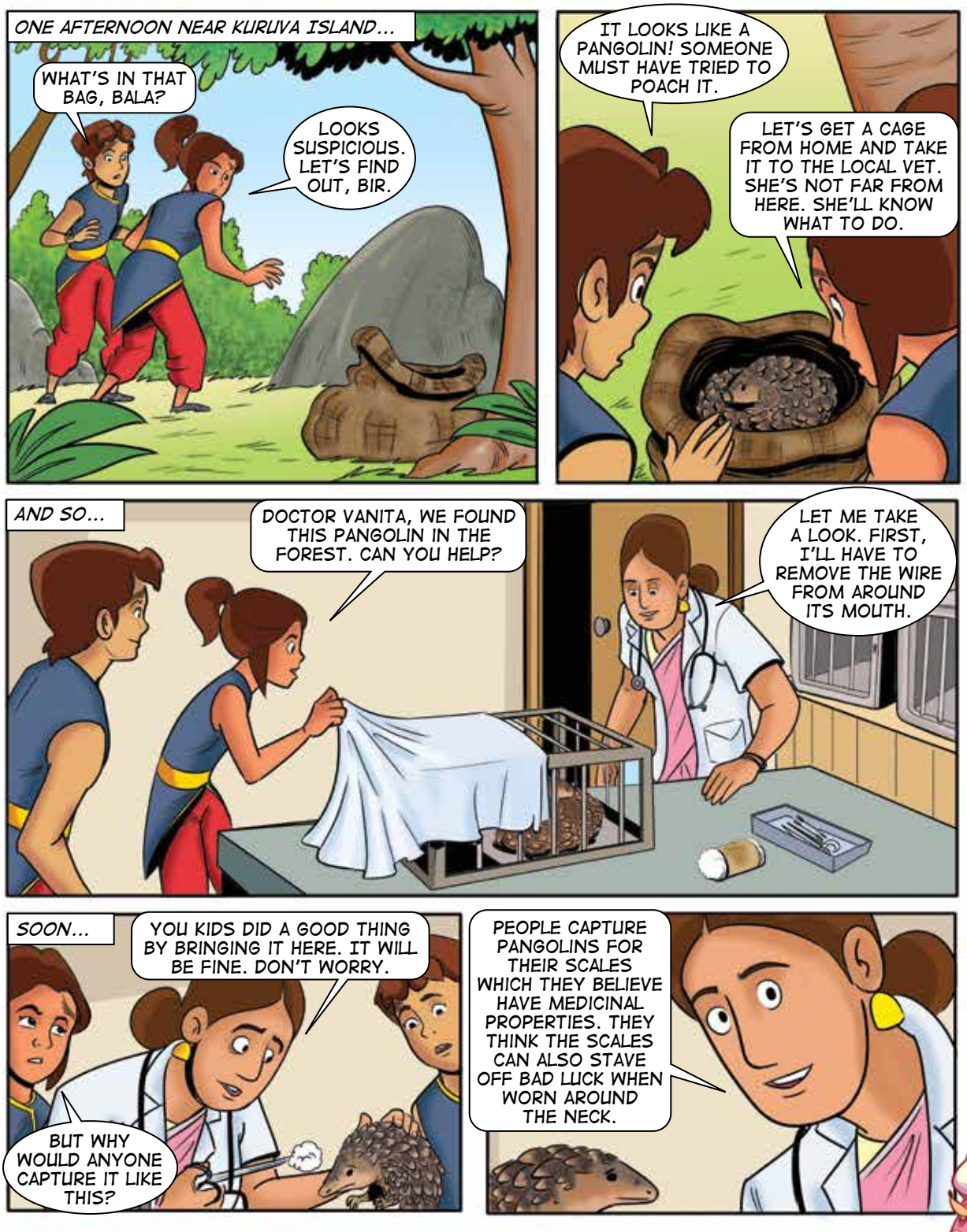
Research Sunita Pradhan

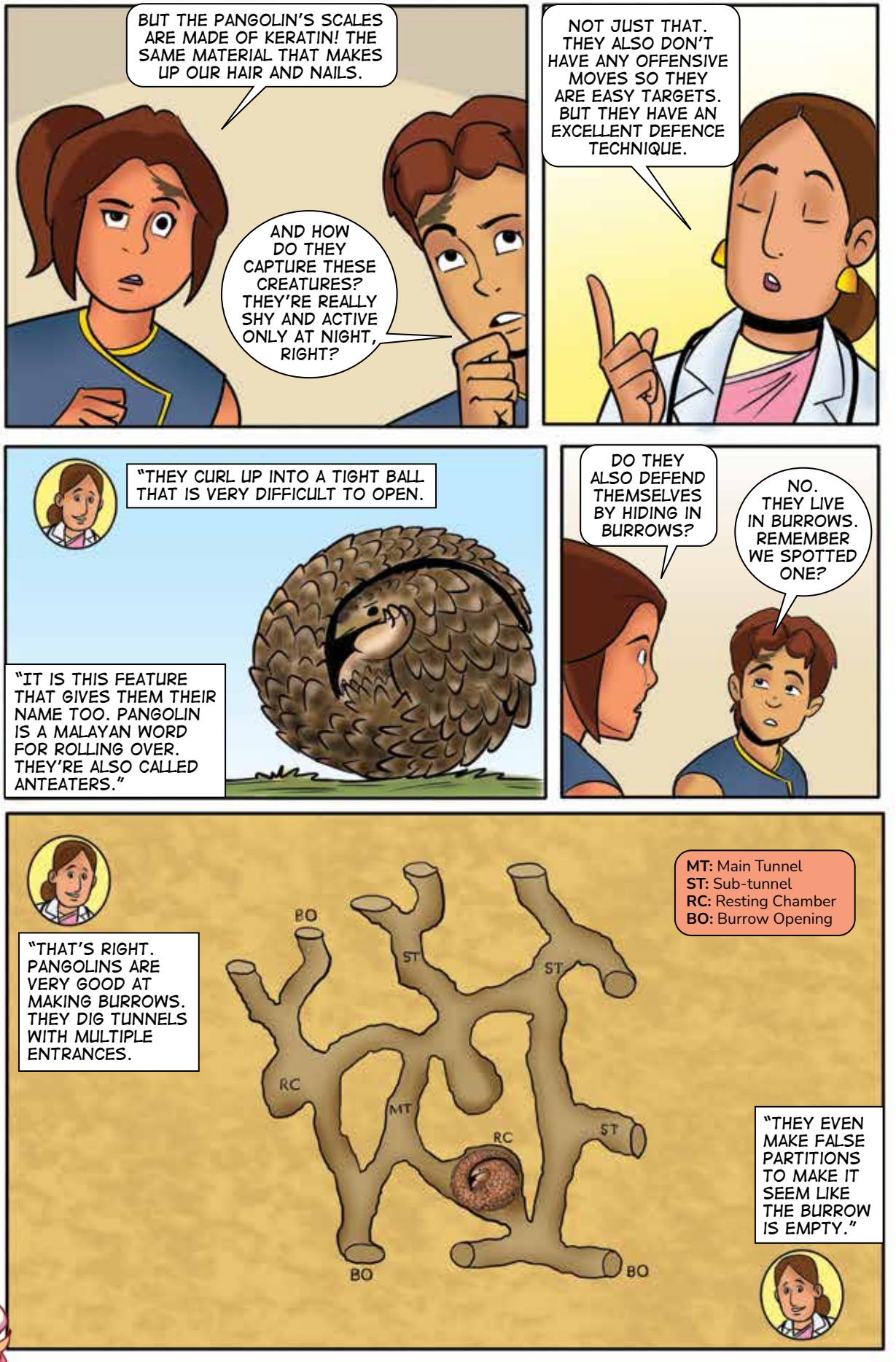
Story & Script Devika Soni

Pencils & Inks Vineet Nair

Colours Snehangshu Mazumder

Letters Pranay Bendre


ONE AFTERNOON NEAR KURUVA ISLAND...
WHAT'S IN THAT BAG, BALA?
LOOKS SUSPICIOUS. LET'S FIND OUT, BIR.
IT LOOKS LIKE A PANGOLIN! SOMEONE MUST HAVE TRIED TO POACH IT.
LET'S GET A CAGE FROM HOME AND TAKE IT TO THE LOCAL VET. SHE'S NOT FAR FROM HERE. SHE'LL KNOW WHAT TO DO.
AND SO...
DOCTOR VANITA, WE FOUND THIS PANGOLIN IN THE FOREST. CAN YOU HELP?
LET ME TAKE A LOOK. FIRST, I'LL HAVE TO REMOVE THE WIRE FROM AROUND ITS MOUTH.
SOON...
YOU KIDS DID A GOOD THING BY BRINGING IT HERE. IT WILL BE FINE. DON'T WORRY.
BUT WHY WOULD ANYONE CAPTURE IT LIKE THIS?
PEOPLE CAPTURE PANGOLINS FOR THEIR SCALES WHICH THEY BELIEVE HAVE MEDICINAL PROPERTIES. THEY THINK THE SCALES CAN ALSO STAVE OFF BAD LUCK WHEN WORN AROUND THE NECK.

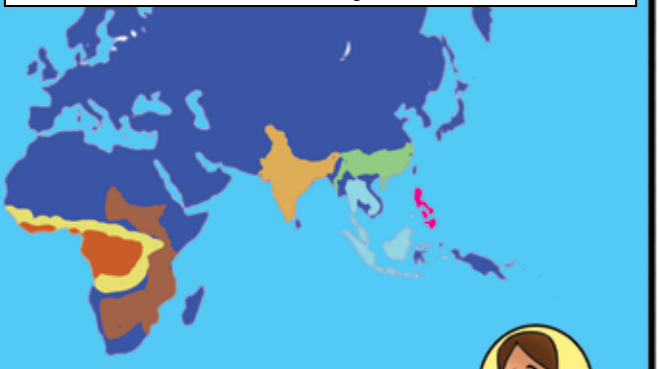

BUT THE PANGOLIN'S SCALES ARE MADE OF KERATIN! THE SAME MATERIAL THAT MAKES UP OUR HAIR AND NAILS.
AND HOW DO THEY CAPTURE THESE CREATURES? THEY'RE REALLY SHY AND ACTIVE ONLY AT NIGHT, RIGHT?
NOT JUST THAT. THEY ALSO DON'T HAVE ANY OFFENSIVE MOVES SO THEY ARE EASY TARGETS. BUT THEY HAVE AN EXCELLENT DEFENCE TECHNIQUE.
"THEY CURL UP INTO A TIGHT BALL THAT IS VERY DIFFICULT TO OPEN.
"IT IS THIS FEATURE THAT GIVES THEM THEIR NAME TOO. PANGOLIN IS A MALAYAN WORD FOR ROLLING OVER. THEY'RE ALSO CALLED ANTEATERS."
DO THEY ALSO DEFEND THEMSELVES BY HIDING IN BURROWS?
NO. THEY LIVE IN BURROWS. REMEMBER WE SPOTTED ONE?
"THAT'S RIGHT. PANGOLINS ARE VERY GOOD AT MAKING BURROWS. THEY DIG TUNNELS WITH MULTIPLE ENTRANCES.
MT: Main Tunnel
ST: Sub-tunnel
RC: Resting Chamber
BO: Burrow Opening
BO
ST
ST
RC
MT
RC
ST
BO
BO
"THEY EVEN MAKE FALSE PARTITIONS TO MAKE IT SEEM LIKE THE BURROW IS EMPTY."

www.amarchitrakatha.com

ARE PANGOLINS ONLY FOUND IN INDIA, DOCTOR VANITA?

NO, BIR. THEY LIVE IN FORESTS AND FARMLANDS AROUND THE WORLD.

"SOME SPECIES OF PANGOLIN ARE FOUND IN PARTS OF AFRICA, THE PHILIPPINES, CHINA AND SOUTHEAST ASIA.



"CHINESE AND INDIAN PANGOLINS ARE FOUND IN PARTS OF INDIA."

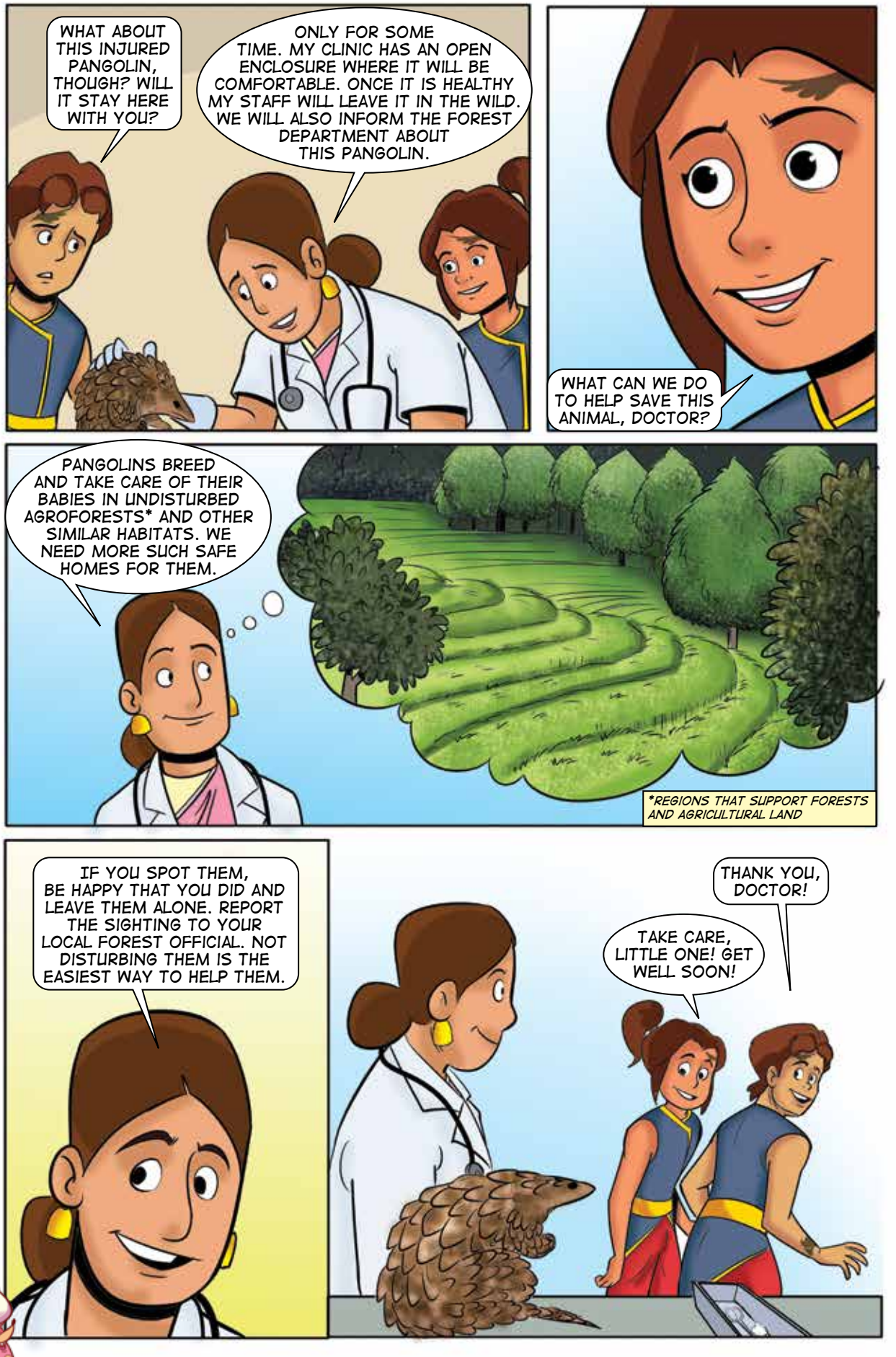
DO WE KNOW HOW MANY PANGOLINS THERE ARE IN INDIA?

THE EXACT NUMBER AND HABITAT OF THE PANGOLIN POPULATION IN INDIA IS NOT KNOWN. BUT THEY ARE IN DANGER BECAUSE OF POACHERS.

IUCN* HAS DECLARED THE CHINESE PANGOLIN AS CRITICALLY ENDANGERED AND THE INDIAN PANGOLIN AS ENDANGERED.

*INTERNATIONAL UNION FOR CONSERVATION OF NATURE, AN ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANIZATION

PANGOLINS ARE KNOWN FOR BEING THE MOST TRAFFICKED MAMMALS IN THE WORLD BECAUSE OF THEIR SCALES AND MEAT.


WHAT ABOUT THIS INJURED PANGOLIN, THOUGH? WILL IT STAY HERE WITH YOU?
ONLY FOR SOME TIME. MY CLINIC HAS AN OPEN ENCLOSURE WHERE IT WILL BE COMFORTABLE. ONCE IT IS HEALTHY MY STAFF WILL LEAVE IT IN THE WILD. WE WILL ALSO INFORM THE FOREST DEPARTMENT ABOUT THIS PANGOLIN.
WHAT CAN WE DO TO HELP SAVE THIS ANIMAL, DOCTOR?
PANGOLINS BREED AND TAKE CARE OF THEIR BABIES IN UNDISTURBED AGROFORESTS* AND OTHER SIMILAR HABITATS. WE NEED MORE SUCH SAFE HOMES FOR THEM.
*REGIONS THAT SUPPORT FORESTS AND AGRICULTURAL LAND
IF YOU SPOT THEM, BE HAPPY THAT YOU DID AND LEAVE THEM ALONE. REPORT THE SIGHTING TO YOUR LOCAL FOREST OFFICIAL. NOT DISTURBING THEM IS THE EASIEST WAY TO HELP THEM.
TAKE CARE, LITTLE ONE! GET WELL SOON!
THANK YOU, DOCTOR!

www.amarchitrakatha.com